



## **FISHING NORTHWEST INDIANA'S LAKE MICHIGAN SHORELINE AND TRIBUTARIES**

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This packet is a summary of fishing opportunities along Northwest Indiana's shoreline of Lake Michigan and its tributaries. Fish species such as coho salmon, Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, brown trout, lake trout, yellow perch, smallmouth bass and various sunfish all contribute to the catch. Fishing opportunities are available to all types of anglers including boat, shoreline and stream.

### **HISTORY**

Lake Michigan is the third largest of the Great Lakes and the sixth largest lake in the world (Beeton 1984). It is the only Great Lake entirely within the United States, but because of fish movement between Lakes Michigan and Huron and its discharge to Huron, the lake is important internationally (Eshenroder, et. al. 1995). Lake Michigan, with a surface area of 57,750 km<sup>2</sup>, is divided into:

- 1) a southern basin, relatively smooth in contour, with a maximum depth of 558ft., and
- 2) an irregularly shaped northern basin with a maximum depth of 922ft.

Native stocks of lake trout once comprised a great resource in Lake Michigan. However, predation by the parasitic sea lamprey, coupled with intense commercial fishing in the 1940s

and 1950s nearly eliminated the lake trout. Sea lampreys, native to the Atlantic Ocean, entered the Great Lakes system in the 1800s through manmade locks and shipping canals. The first observation of the lamprey occurred in Lake Ontario in the 1830's. Through the Welland Canal, a navigational canal connecting Lakes Ontario and Erie, sea lampreys moved into Lake Erie. After spreading throughout Erie, sea lampreys moved to the other Great Lakes, appearing in Lake Michigan in 1936 (Charlebois 1996). By the late 1940's, populations of sea lampreys exploded in all of the upper Great Lakes resulting in the drastic population decline of lake trout. With the Great Lakes top predator in decline, came the next invader, the alewife. Alewives, unintentionally introduced into Lake Michigan in 1949 from the Atlantic Ocean, depleted food sources for themselves and other native fishes. Their high numbers and ability to out-compete fish with similar diets led to depletions and local extinctions of native species. These disruptions in the native fish community and food web, coupled with habitat alterations and degradation, contributed to the decline of important commercial and sport fisheries.

Rehabilitation of the Lake Michigan fish community began in 1960 with the extension of the sea lamprey control program to Lake Michigan, plantings of lake trout and the

introduction of coho salmon, Chinook salmon, brown trout and steelhead trout. Lake trout planting began in 1965 and coho salmon and Chinook salmon were introduced from the Pacific Northwest in 1966 and 1967 (Eshenroder et. al. 1995). Rainbow trout, or steelhead, and brown trout were also extensively planted. Of the five major salmonids stocked, only lake trout was released with the main objective being rehabilitation (i.e. to re-establish reproducing populations). The others were stocked to provide angling opportunities and to utilize the overabundance of nonnative alewives, which became a nuisance when vast numbers died and washed up on local beaches.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife has been stocking salmon and trout along northwest Indiana's shoreline since the late 1960's. The area stocked extends from Michigan City to Whiting, Indiana and includes sites along the St. Joseph River, Trail Creek and the East Branch of the Little Calumet River. The number of trout and salmon stocked in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan from 1983 through 2006 can be found on page 16.

Brown trout stocking in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan began in 2002 through a cooperative trade agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IL DNR). Indiana trades Indiana-born skamania steelhead for the Illinois brown trout. Due to hatchery constraints, Indiana last stocked brown trout into Indiana waters of Lake Michigan in the early 1980s. The continuation of the brown trout stocking program is reliant upon future availability of fish from the IL DNR.

The introduction of Pacific Northwest salmonids has since produced a more stable and productive fish community.

## **STOCKING SCHEDULE**

The stocking schedule of trout and salmon in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan includes: yearling summer-run steelhead stocked in early April (14-months of age), Chinook salmon in early May (6-months of age), brown trout in early July (8-months of age), coho salmon in early November (12-months of age), fingerling summer-run skamania steelhead in October (8-months of age) and winter-run steelhead in December (9-months of age).

The Pacific salmon and trout spend their adult lives in the Great Lakes in place of their native ocean. When they become sexually mature, they migrate to the stream or lake area where they were stocked in order to spawn. Chinook and coho die after spawning; steelhead and brown trout may live to spawn in future years. The age of sexual maturity varies among species. Normally, a Chinook matures between 2 to 4 years of age, coho between age 2 to 3, steelhead between age 3 to 5 and brown trout between 2 to 3 years of age.

Chinook salmon, coho salmon and steelhead make up the majority of the fish migrating/returning to Trail Creek, Little Calumet River and Salt Creek.

## **INTERAGENCY MANAGEMENT**

### **Who manages the Great Lakes and Lake Michigan?**

The interagency management of fishery resources in the Great Lakes was formalized in the 1980s when *A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries* (Great Lakes Fishery Commission 1980) was ratified by the heads of federal, state, provincial, and tribal resource agencies (known as the Committee of the Whole, COMW) concerned with these water bodies (Eshenroder et. al. 1995). The Joint Plan implemented a

framework for cooperative fishery management under the aegis of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC). The Joint Plan established procedures for achieving a consensus approach among Great Lakes fisheries-management agencies. Fish communities in each lake must be managed as a whole. The Joint Plan ensures that each agency has a stake in the entire system and recognizes that the interactions among fish species is important in the overall management of the Lakes' fisheries.

Individual lake committees are responsible for implementing this consensus approach to fish community management. Lake committees are composed of a single representative from each management agency with jurisdiction on a Great Lake. **The Lake Michigan (Lake) Committee (LMC)** has representatives from the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin along with the Chippewa-Ottawa Treaty Fishery Management Authority. The Lake Michigan fishery biologist stationed in Michigan City and the North Region supervisor stationed in Columbia City are Indiana's representatives.

## **WHERE TO FISH**

Indiana's share of Lake Michigan is the smallest of the four states bordering the Lake (approximately 1% of Lake Michigan area), encompassing approximately 43 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline (224 square miles). Most of the area is highly developed and heavily industrialized, with the exception of the Dunes National Lakeshore and the Indiana Dunes State Park.

**Lake\*** There are various sites providing shoreline access and boat launching ramps along the Indiana shoreline of Lake Michigan

(see the enclosed map of the Indiana shoreline of Lake Michigan).

The Michigan City pier, basin, and adjoining ramp (owned by City of Michigan City), provide access for both shore and boat anglers. Another municipal ramp is located upstream on Trail Creek (Trail Creek Marina). In addition, a public fishing site for shoreline anglers exists adjacent to the Michigan City DNR building (handicap accessible).

A public fishing site for shoreline anglers (handicap accessible) is available at the Port of Indiana. Various private marinas along Burns Waterway (State Road 249; Burns Ditch) provide boat launching facilities.

East Chicago, Lake County Parks and Recreation Whihala Beach County Park (Whiting) and Hammond provide boat launching facilities in addition to access for shoreline anglers (all are handicap accessible).

{ \*All previously listed boat ramps from Michigan City west, to Hammond, charge a launch and/or entrance fee. All previously listed shore access sites, with the exception of the DNR public access site and the Port of Indiana public access site, may charge a parking fee. }

**Stream** Trail Creek has six public fishing sites, one is handicap accessible. These include the access site adjacent to the DNR building; Robert Peo Public Access (located on Liberty Trail); U.S. 35; Trail Creek Forks (U.S. 20); Johnson Road and Creek Ridge Park. Creek Ridge Park (located 5 miles east of U.S. 421 on County Road 400 N. in Michigan City) is a LaPorte County park that is handicap accessible (Various fishing club members donated materials and their time to construct a handicap-accessible ramp at this park).

The East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Salt Creek also provide public access for fishing opportunities. Salt Creek runs through Imagination Glenn County Park and Haven Hollow Park, both offering angler-access. Two State-managed public fishing sites are also located on Salt Creek, the Chustak Public Fishing Area and the Salt Creek Public Fishing Area, both located near Valparaiso, Indiana. Portions of the East Branch of the Little Calumet River flow through the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore property, which the public can utilize. For more information regarding fishing opportunities on the Dunes National Lakeshore property, contact them directly at (219) 926-7561.

Since the majority of the Lake Michigan tributaries run through private property; **permission** from the landowner to fish is **required** on these private lands.

**Discharges** Limited access to warm-water discharges is provided by industrial plants located on the shoreline. Due to recent economic downturns and increased security, many areas have either been closed or public access is not being granted.

Dominion State Line Power Plant (formerly known as State Line Generating Station), located on the Indiana/Illinois State Line, BP Oil Company (Amoco) in Whiting, and the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) generating station in Michigan City provide fishing opportunities for brown trout, coho, and steelhead in the winter/spring. Yellow perch, bass and various trout/salmon can be found during the summer.

All discharges previously listed are **privately owned** and can close these sites at their discretion **at any time**, i.e., limiting access during adverse weather conditions due to

dangers associated with high winds and/or icy conditions or closure based upon the status of the current Homeland Security threat level.

## **WINTER OPPORTUNITIES**

During the months of January, February and March, fishing activity is limited to the streams and warmwater discharges along the shoreline. All the discharges originate from shoreline property owned by private industry. Three warmwater discharges are available to shore anglers for access.

Dominion State Line Generating Station, set on the Indiana-Illinois state line is open to the public on a limited daily basis for angling opportunities. It is located off 103rd Street in South Chicago, Illinois. BP Oil Company (formerly Amoco) allows day and night fishing at their discharge, located off of 119th Street in Whiting near the eastern edge of Whiting Park. Lastly, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) Michigan City generating station, located just west of the Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Office (100 West Water Street; Michigan City), is open to angling from sunrise to sunset. The prior areas have all been closed during times when the lake is too treacherous or the National Homeland Security threat level has been elevated.

This type of warm-water discharge fishing can produce catches of brown trout, with steelhead, coho, and an occasional Chinook also contributing. Drum, smallmouth bass, catfish and walleye can also be found at these discharges. Suggested equipment for fishing discharges in the winter includes (not limited to): proper insulated clothing for Northern Indiana's harsh winters; two-three rods for both casting and bait-fishing; 6-10 pound test line rated for fishing in sub-zero to 45 degree temperatures; **long**-handled net of 8-12 feet

(most fishing areas by the discharges are much higher than the water). Best lures/baits include small alewives (frozen, 1½ to 2½ inches); nightcrawlers; spawn bags; small spoons (2/5 to 3/4 oz., such as little cleos; ko-wobblers). Body baits (rapalas-size 7 and 9) and spinners work on occasion. Suggested colors for prior listed lures: silver/green, chrome/green, chrome/orange, chartreuse w/red or black dots; fluorescent orange lures, etc.. Always take along a wide variety of lures/baits because the fish will show preferences on a daily basis.

## **SPRING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Trout and Salmon**

Boat-fishing season along the southern shoreline of Lake Michigan usually begins with the departure of ice around mid-February to April. Between March and mid-May, most of the fishing activity occurs within a two-mile band along the shoreline with coho salmon contributing close to 90% of the catch. Most coho salmon stocked in the lake by Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana will stage in southern Lake Michigan in the spring, due to annual migration patterns. The 2 and 3-year-old coho gain weight rapidly, weighing approximately 2 pounds in March and up to 5 pounds in May when they begin moving offshore. Steelhead, brown trout, Chinook salmon, and some larger coho are also taken during this period.

Trolling with thin-fins, rapalas, thunder-sticks (and various other body-baits and spoons), spinners, or dodgers and flies are the fishing methods most frequently used by boat anglers. Casting into warmwater plumes in early spring when the lake temperature is still in the high 30's or low 40's has had some success. Suggested color combinations include blue/white; bright red w/black; solid chartreuse,

solid hot pink, solid orange w/silver, chrome or gold.

Shore anglers have found the months of March (and as early as mid-February) through April to be the best for catching coho in the spring. They cast using the same types of artificials as the boat anglers or fish with bait (nightcrawlers, spawn, waxworms, squid and shrimp, suspending bait off bottom or from 4-6 feet below the surface). Various piers provide fishing access along Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline.

### **Rainbow Smelt**

Rainbow smelt may be taken by single seine or net from March 1 through May 30 along Indiana's shoreline of Lake Michigan. The smelt run usually takes place beginning in April to the first half of May. However, the times of the runs and number of fish available are directly dependent upon several environmental variables (e.g. water temperatures). Smelt are caught by using nets or seines after dusk. Please refer to the Indiana Recreation/Fishing Guide for specific requirements.

### **Sunfish Family**

The sunfish family can be divided into three groups:

- 1) smallmouth and largemouth bass (black bass)
- 2) the crappies
- 3) the true sunfish and rock bass

In Lake Michigan, these fish inhabit mostly breakwaters and other areas that are protected from wave action (marina basins). All are spring spawners, with spawning for some extending into the summer months.

**Smallmouth Bass.** Smallmouth bass, a nearshore species, are confined to reefs and shoal water areas. Prior to development of Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline, the nearshore waters were relatively shallow, with a consistent sand bottom and little to no structure. Shoreline development (i.e., rip-rap shoreline and breakwaters) has resulted in the creation of suitable smallmouth bass habitat. Smallmouth bass numbers have responded positively to this increase in habitat. Wave energy has a direct influence on smallmouth distribution.

Protected areas, such as the land side of breakwaters are areas that produce the best action. Angling methods for bass include bait casting and the use of common live baits (crawlers; minnows). Smallmouth are particularly vulnerable to fishing after dark.

**Panfish** (bluegill, rock bass, pumpkinseed) These species are commonly found at all of the shore fishing sites, especially at the marinas (Hammond; Pastrick; Washington Park). Most are sedentary, remaining much of the time near submerged cover or hovering quietly in the shade of an overhanging object. Insects, crustaceans, and small fish are the most important food sources. Feeding occurs at the surface, as well as on the bottom. When fishing for these species, pay particular attention to the marina fishing rules and regulations. Most marinas do not allow fishing inside the marina itself, unless a special area has been opened to marina fishing.

**Rock Bass** This fish favors clear, cool to warm waters over a rocky/gravel bottom with some vegetation. They are also found at most of the marina shore access sites, near breakwaters/stone-armored shorelines. Rock bass utilize a variety of foods, including crayfish, small fish and insects. Adults feed mostly in the evening and morning hours.

## **SUMMER**

### **Trout and Salmon**

The water temperature close to shore increases rapidly in late spring, driving coho and most other salmonids into the deep, cooler offshore waters. Between May and the end of July, boat anglers in pursuit of trout and salmon normally fish at depths ranging between 70 and 200 feet of water. This entails traveling a distance of 6-to-20 miles from shore, depending upon the point of departure (these water depths require traveling offshore to Illinois or Michigan waters. If fishing IL or MI waters, a fishing license from the appropriate state is also necessary). Downriggers are used to get the lure down to the temperature zone sought by trout and salmon. Lake trout, coho, chinook, steelhead, and to a lesser extent, brown trout, all contribute to the catch.

### **Yellow Perch**

Yellow perch move closer to the shoreline during these months and are available on a limited basis to shore and boat anglers. Minnows, crayfish tails, frozen shrimp and crab fished at depths less than forty feet June through September have produced the best catches. Shore fishing opportunities also exist throughout the summer months at most of the shoreline fishing sites.

### **Skamania Steelhead**

By mid to late June, depending on water temperatures and water levels in the tributaries, the summer-run skamania will return to Indiana's tributaries where they were planted as fingerlings or yearlings. The tributaries the Division of Fish and Wildlife stocks include the St. Joseph River, the East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Trail Creek.

Most skamania will "stage" nearshore in Lake Michigan, with fish rushing upstream--especially after a heavy rainfall to begin the

“run”. By mid-August (dependent upon tributary temperatures and water levels), good numbers of skamania have entered their home tributary streams; however, skamania will continue to enter the area tributaries throughout the fall and winter months (through March). Skamania spawning activities begin around mid-February through March. The spent steelhead will return to Lake Michigan throughout March and into April. Thus, the summer-run or skamania steelhead provide a year-round fishery.

### **Sunfish family**

See page 5 under the “Spring Opportunities” section.

## **FALL**

The fall sport fishery is a direct product of Indiana's (and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-USFWS) stocking program:

### **Skamania and Winter-run Steelhead**

Adult steelhead (summer-run and winter-run) return to the streams where they were stocked as fingerlings or yearlings.

### **Lake Trout**

Lake trout display a spawning pattern close to the Port of Indiana, with a run of lake trout that develops along the shoreline between mid-October and mid-November. The greatest concentration of lake trout occurs at the Port of Indiana, which is close to the major federal stocking site (USFWS).

### **Chinook and Coho Salmon**

Chinook and coho salmon return to streams and spawn from late August to early November. Chinook and coho salmon die after spawning.

*(The table on page 12 provides a summary of peak angling periods on Lake Michigan).*

For stream anglers, the best time of year to fish the trout and salmon is summarized by the following:

### **Chinook and Coho salmon:**

September through mid-November

### **Skamania (summer) Steelhead:**

Mid-June to mid-October

(Also, various winter months from January through March. However, success is strongly dependent upon environmental/stream conditions, particularly stream water levels)

### **Winter Steelhead:**

Mid-November to mid-March

Summer-run Skamania steelhead return to area streams from July (as early as mid-June) through the winter months and spawn from mid-February to late February (can be as late as March); winter-run steelhead return beginning in mid-late October, with the bulk of the return in February and March. Winter-run steelhead spawn from mid-March to mid-April. All species of salmonids (coho, Chinook, steelhead trout, and brown trout) are available to sport anglers during the fall spawning runs (boat and pier anglers as trout and salmon return to their stocking site; stream anglers when trout and salmon move into/upstream the tributaries).

## **SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT FOR TROUT/SALMON FISHING**

To fish the trout and salmon, most anglers use a heavy rod with 10-12 pound test line. Medium spoons (cleos/kowobblers), plugs, spinners, and body-baits (rapalas/shadlings) are used for Chinook. Smaller spoons and spinners are used for coho. Small spinners or rooster tails work

well for steelhead. Nightcrawlers, shrimp and waxworms are successful at times, especially in summer. Spawn sacks (small clumps of trout or salmon eggs wrapped in mesh bags) are used throughout the year and provide good year-round action. Typical color patterns for trout and salmon include fluorescent orange, chartreuse, red, green/black, and blue or any combination of the prior listed colors with silver/chrome.

Anglers report good success with black or brown stonefly patterns, chartreuse flies, green and orange woolyworms, egg sucking leeches, and many others depending upon the time of year and the presentation of the flies to the fish.

## **EXOTIC SPECIES AND THEIR IMPACTS**

Since the early 1800s, 139 non-indigenous aquatic organisms have become established in the Great Lakes basin (Charlebois 1996). This number includes 59 plants, 25 fishes, 24 algae, 14 mollusks, and 6 crustaceans. Unintentional releases from bait buckets, home aquaria, and ships (ballast water) account for 1/3 of these species introductions. Over half of the exotic/introduced species came from Eurasia, with many native to the Atlantic Ocean. Many of these exotic species have had negative impacts to the Lake Michigan ecosystem, including but not limited to: sea lamprey, rainbow smelt, alewife, zebra mussels, round goby and spiny water flea.

Successful invaders, such as the prior species, usually have detrimental effects on native species, their habitats and human activities dependent upon water resources. Once exotic species establish themselves, eradication becomes impossible without further damaging the environment. Not all aquatic species introduced to the Great Lakes have been

successful invaders. Species that succeed have characteristics that make them successful, including: hardiness, aggressiveness, prolific breeding, and rapid dispersal.

The zebra mussel, introduced to the Great Lakes in 1986, is an excellent example of an exotic species harmful potential. Zebra mussels threaten the entire food web by filtering vast amounts of basic food from the ecosystem. In turn, less food is available to sustain the native species that are dependent on the same food resources. Economic and social consequences have also occurred, with raw water intakes for industry and public drinking water being fouled.

### ***What can anglers do?***

Anglers play an important role in management strategies for preventing the introduction and spread of nonindigenous species (plants, animals and fish diseases). Tips for reducing the spread of non-native species includes:

- 1) Dumping bait buckets only in areas where they were filled.
- 2) Anglers should not take unusual species home to put in aquariums [while there may be the temptation to take species for a home aquarium or home fish pond; anglers should know the law about possession of non-native species such as round gobies (Indiana law prohibits the possession of live gobies)].
- 3) Dispose unwanted bait on land. Do not release live bait into any water body.
- 4) Drain water from your boat, livewell and bilge before leaving a water access.



- 5) Do not dump live fish from one body of water into another. Do not move fish or fish parts from one body of water to another.
- 6) Never dip your bait bucket into a lake or river if it has water in it from another.
- 7) Weeds that have been removed from fishing hooks and left in the boat or weeds tangled in propellers should be removed and left at the lake where they were collected.
- 8) Clean boats, trailers, and other equipment thoroughly between fishing trips to keep from transporting undesirable fish pathogens and organisms, from one water body to another with special care to clean fishing equipment when you are done fishing known locations with non-native species and fish diseases. A light bleach solution is a good disinfectant for cleaning equipment.
- 9) After cleaning allow boats, trailers, and other equipment to fully dry for 4 to 6 hours in the sun.
- 10) Handle fish as gently as possible if you intend to release them - and release them as quickly as possible.
- 11) Refrain from hauling the fish for long periods in live wells if you intend to release them.
- 12) Learn to identify exotic species and educate other anglers about measures they can take to prevent the spread of fish diseases and other aquatic nuisance species. Information on how to identify aquatic nuisance species is available on the internet, check out Illinois/Indiana Sea Grant web page at:

<http://www.iisgcp.org/products/free.htm>

Release of aquarium pets, catches from other waters or live bait into lake and rivers is considered “biological littering” and pollutes our waters, just like dumping chemicals. Additionally, ***it is illegal to stock any fish in public waters without the proper permit.***

## **FISH CONSUMPTION** **ADVISORY**

Indiana's fish consumption advisory is similar to the health advice you hear or read about every day regarding diet, exercise or safety. How you use this information to protect your health and enjoy life is a matter of choice. The purpose of this advisory is to make sure you have the proper information to make those choices.

One common misunderstanding about the advisory is the difference between no consumption and restricted consumption of fish. The advisory is not a ban on eating fish from lakes and streams as some people believe. The fish consumption advisory will help you make the right choice about how much fish to eat and what type of fish to eat. If you follow the advisory, you will minimize the risk from eating fish and maximize your health benefits by using fish as a valuable source of protein.

You should use the advisory to make informed decisions about where to fish, which fish to eat and how much to eat. The advisory should not discourage you from going fishing or eating the fish you catch. The advisory is a source of information that allows you to enjoy your fishing trip and protect your health at the same time.

A statewide fish tissue monitoring program provides data for Indiana's fish consumption advisory. New tissue data is collected every year from new areas or sites previously

sampled to keep health information updated. This long term commitment to human health protection also serves as a constant monitor for changes in the environment.

The Indiana Fish Consumption Advisory is issued by the Indiana State Department of Health. Consult the complete advisory for specific information on the body of water you plan to fish.

For a complete copy of the fish consumption advisory or if you have questions concerning the advisory contact the Indiana State Department of Health at:

Indiana State Department of Health  
Environmental Epidemiology Section  
2 North Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
(317) 233-7162

or visit the Indiana State Department of Health web site:

[http://www.in.gov/isdh/dataandstats/fish/fish\\_adv\\_index.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/dataandstats/fish/fish_adv_index.htm)

## **SPECIAL NOTICE TO ANGLERS**

Recent changes in the law have resulted in the following notice to anglers that the Port of Indiana is CLOSED to all recreational watercraft including fishing from a boat. The area is posted. The following is a summary of the Indiana Administrative Code for this law:

### **130 IAC 4-1-11 Fishing; swimming; boat launching**

Authority: IC 8-10-1-7; IC 8-10-1-9  
Affected: IC 8-10-1

Sec. 11 (a) No person shall fish in the port area between sunset and sunrise. Fishing is allowed only within the designated fishing area that is maintained and is under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources and the

commission.

(b) No person shall launch a boat or fish from a boat in the port area.

(c) Swimming is prohibited in the port area. (*Indiana Port Commission; 130 IAC 4-1-11; filed Jun 6, 2002, 11:22 a.m.: 25 IR 3710*)

### **New reciprocal sportfishing agreement for Calumet Harbor area of Lake Michigan**

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources created a new reciprocal sportfishing agreement for the Calumet Harbor area of Lake Michigan that allows for resident anglers of each state - as well as individuals holding non-resident fishing licenses from either state - to fish in the reciprocal area.

The new agreement replaces the one established in 1989. While the two states have had a reciprocal agreement for many years, there had been ongoing confusion by anglers as to what was included. The new agreement provides clarification. The agreement means Illinoisans holding both a resident Illinois license and a nonresident Indiana license can fish in the reciprocal area, taking the daily limit for whichever state they choose, but not for both states. The place from which an angler launches a boat does not impact his or her rights under the agreement. The boundaries for the reciprocal area are as follows:

– The east-west portion of the breakwater system which extends lakeward from the Lake Michigan shoreline at about 85th Street in Chicago on the north (the area north of the breakwater is not included).

– On the east, the reciprocal area extends from the far east end of the northern boundary, southeast to the southern boundary.

- On the south, the area extends from the southern tip of the breakwater system, southwest to the east side of the pier at the south edge of the Calumet Park beach.

- The western boundary is the existing Lake Michigan shoreline from Taylor Pier on the south edge of Calumet Park beach to the far western point of the northern boundary.

The reciprocal waters also include the main channel of the Calumet River from Lake Michigan downstream to the Ewing Avenue bridge, anglers fishing from the Illinois shoreline of Lake Michigan in Calumet Park and from the Calumet Harbor breakwater system and from any other publically accessible areas in the reciprocal zone.

The reciprocal agreement does NOT apply to the channel waters of the North Slip on the northwest corner of Calumet Harbor and the South Slip off the Calumet River northeast of the Ewing Avenue Bridge. The agreement also does not include privately-owned shorelines, including both shorelines of the Calumet River and the Ewing Avenue Bridge. Fishing access from the Lake Michigan shoreline in Calumet Park is allowed only at areas and hours allowed by the Chicago Park District.

Illinois and Indiana residents who are exempt from sportfishing license requirements in their home state are also exempt from sportfishing license requirements in the reciprocal fishing area. Individuals can take only one daily limit of fish per day, so anglers from either state with both an Illinois and an Indiana license must choose which state's regulations they intend to follow – they cannot take both an Illinois and an Indiana limit of fish.

A map of the reciprocal sportfishing boundaries can be obtained by contacting the Lake Michigan office at (219) 874-6824.

## **LITERATURE CITED**

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- Eshenroder, R.L., M.E. Holey, T.K. Gorenflo, and R.D. Clark, Jr. 1995. Fish-community objectives for Lake Michigan. *Great Lakes Fish. Comm. Spec. Pub.* 95-3. 56p.

Fishing Northwest Indiana's Lake Michigan Shoreline and Tributaries

Type of Fish	How to Fish	Best Time of Year	Average Fish Size
Coho Salmon	pier boat	mid February/ March thru May	2 - 4 lbs.
	stream	Sept./Oct.	4 lbs.
Chinook Salmon	some pier boat	May; mid-July thru September	8 - 14 lbs.
	stream	Sept./Oct.	8 - 14 lbs.
Steelhead (Skamania)	pier boat	mid-June thru mid-Aug.	8 - 12 lbs.
	stream	July-February	8 - 12 lbs.
Winter-run Steelhead	pier stream	late October- thru March	8-12 lbs.
Lake Trout	boat	mid June thru August; mid-Oct. to Nov.	8 - 14 lbs.
Yellow Perch	pier boat	July to mid-September	8.0 - 10.0 inches
Smallmouth and other Sunfish species	pier boat	June to September	10-16 inches 6-8 inches

All peak angling opportunities listed are dependent upon environmental variables such as temperature, and may vary (due to local weather conditions).

**\*NOTE\***

Fishing in offshore areas requires standard and various safety equipment such as life jackets, ship-to-shore radio, a properly compensated compass etc. An auxiliary motor and ship-to-shore radio should be included at all times, especially in emergency situations. Never underestimate the potential for sudden weather changes, possibly severe, on Lake Michigan! Please refer to the pamphlet "Indiana Boating Laws" for a complete listing of boating rules (Indiana boating laws can be accessed through the Department of Natural Resources Division of Law Enforcement web page at:

<http://www.boat-ed.com/in/handbook>

Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats can be found at:

<http://www.uscgboating.org/safety/fedreqs/landing.htm>

## **RULES TO REMEMBER**

Lake Michigan is divided into state waters owned by Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana [Michigan DNR <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr>; Wisconsin DNR <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/> and Illinois DNR <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/>].

Each state requires that sport anglers possess the required license and/or stamp (Indiana requires a trout and salmon fishing stamp in addition to a fishing license when targeting trout/salmon on Lake Michigan and/or its tributaries, <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/fish/fishng/fishguide.htm>).

### **Trout and salmon (Indiana waters):**

- A 5-2 daily bag limit for the sport harvest of trout and salmon on Lake Michigan and tributaries (5 fish trout and salmon aggregate bag limit, of which no more than 2 may be lake trout) with a 14" minimum size limit.
- You cannot possess more than 5 trout or salmon (no more than 2 may be lake trout) while fishing on Indiana's portion of Lake Michigan, even if you have a fishing license from a neighboring state.
- You cannot use a trot line (power line), set line or throw line to take fish from Lake Michigan.
- Fishing is NOT allowed within 100 feet above or below the Praxair Dam the East Branch of the Little Calumet River.

While there is no closed season for taking trout and salmon from Lake Michigan, certain tributary streams are closed to all fishing from April 1 through June 15. These streams are stocked annually with trout and salmon. The closed fishing period allows these small, vulnerable fish to migrate safely downstream to Lake Michigan. The closed season applies to:

- \* The East Branch of the Little Calumet River in Porter County from U.S. 12 upstream to U.S. 20; this includes portions of Burns Ditch (waters within Portage Marina are included in the closure period).
- \* Trail Creek in LaPorte County from the Franklin Street Bridge in Michigan City upstream to U.S. 35.

### **Indiana Yellow Perch (Indiana waters):**

Results of the 2006 field research on yellow perch in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan provide some evidence the yellow perch stock is rebuilding.

Given the best and most current data available describing the status of the Lake Michigan yellow perch fishery, Indiana yellow perch harvest regulations will remain:

- The current daily bag limit for the sport harvest of yellow perch on Lake Michigan remains at 15. There is no size limit or closed season on yellow perch.
- Commercial fishing for yellow perch will remain closed in 2007.
- You cannot possess more than 15 yellow perch while fishing on Indiana's portion of Lake Michigan, even if you have a fishing license from a neighboring state.

**Black Bass (black bass includes largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass; Indiana waters):**

- Daily bag limit of 3 singly or in aggregate; with a 14" minimum size limit.

**Hook Restrictions**

In the waters including Lake Michigan tributaries, the St. Joseph River and its tributary streams from the Twin Branch Dam downstream to the Michigan state line (St. Joseph County):

- \* Not fish with more than one single hook per line or one artificial bait or harness for use with live bait.
- \* Single hooks, including those on artificial baits, cannot exceed ½ inch from point to shank.
- \* Double and treble hooks are only allowed on artificial baits and shall not exceed 3/8 inch from point to shank.
- \* Any fish taken from Indiana waters must be hooked in the mouth. Foul-hooked fish must be returned to the water.
- \* Snagging is strictly prohibited.

**Please refer to the Indiana Recreation/Fishing Guide for a summary of  
Indiana fishing regulations:**

**<http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/fish/fishng/fishguide.htm>**

The fishing guide is designed as a service to anglers and is not intended to be a complete digest of all fishing regulations. Most regulations are subject to change by administrative rule. For a listing of administrative rules, visit: **<http://www.state.in.us/legislative/iac/title312.html>**

## **Indiana Lake Michigan Fishing Hotlines**

Lake Michigan Fishing Hotline (219) 874-0009  
(updated weekly March thru December)

St. Joseph River Hotline (574) 257-TIPS  
(updated weekly, mid-Feb. to April; mid-June to mid-Dec.)

*The St. Joseph River access guide available by request from the Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Station office and Bodine State Fish Hatchery, (574) 255-4199.*

Internet Fishing Report for Lake Michigan  
and the St. Joseph River can be found on  
the Division of Fish and Wildlife's  
web site:

[http://www.ai.org/serv/dnr\\_fishingreport](http://www.ai.org/serv/dnr_fishingreport)

## **Indiana Lake Michigan Hatcheries**

Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery (Lake Michigan) (219) 369-9591  
Bodine State Fish Hatchery (St. Joseph River) (574) 255-4199

## **Indiana Division of Law Enforcement**

District 10 Headquarters (219) 879-5710  
(Lake/Porter/LaPorte Counties)

North Region Headquarters (765) 473-9722

Turn-in Poachers/Polluters Hotline (TIP) 1-800-TIP-IDNR (847-4367)

*Tips may also be left on the law enforcement web site:* <http://www.in.gov/dnr/lawenfor/TIP/index.html>

## **Additional Numbers / Web-sites of Interest:**

LaPorte County Visitor Bureau  
(219) 872-0031 or 1-800-634-2650  
<http://www.visitlaportecounty.com/>

Porter County Visitor Bureau  
(219) 926-2255 or 1-800-283-8687  
<http://www.casualcoast.com/>

Lake County Visitor Bureau  
1-800-255-5253  
<http://www.alllake.org/>

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore  
(219) 926-7561, ext. 225  
<http://www.nps.gov/indu/>

Indiana Dunes State Park  
(219) 926-1952  
<http://www.state.in.us/dnr/parklake/>

Great Lakes Fisheries Commission  
<http://www.glfc.org/>

Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council  
<http://www.great-lakes.org/>

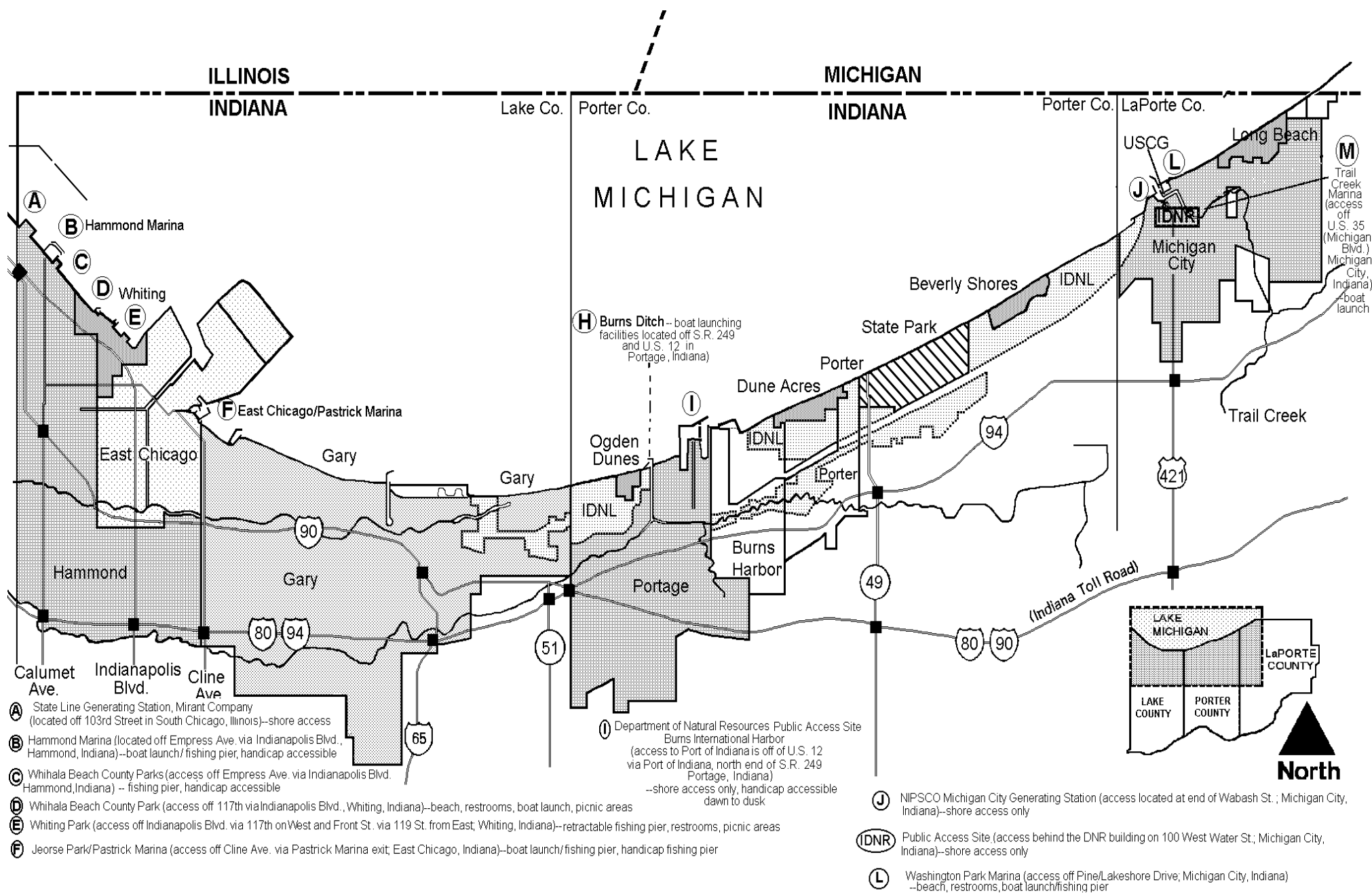
## TROUT AND SALMON STOCKING RECORDS

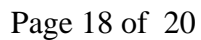
### Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife

Lake Michigan					St. Joseph River		
Year	Chinook	Coho	Steelhead	Brown Trout	Chinook	Coho	Steelhead
'83	238,383	127,555	283,499	0	0	0	0
'84	405,912	156,304	353,667	0	523,023	0	0
'85	354,740	139,018	282,763	0	407,013	0	226,604
'86	341,726	132,854	346,236	0	355,939	0	259,925
'87	310,745	161,787	286,275	0	258,474	0	224,881
'88	502,311	160,374	243,184	0	377,528	0	226,145
'89	530,561	40,720	289,429	0	186,858	0	214,068
'90	476,646	114,153	317,346	0	153,590	0	221,422
'91	546,084	99,980	271,608	0	148,267	0	221,598
'92	330,453	130,518	315,332	0	173,778	0	230,253
'93	292,464	12,316	295,837	0	166,142	0	180,512
'94	368,026	84,397	378,522	0	168,938	0	172,975
'95	364,182	165,809	301,052	0	190,819	0	188,842
'96	362,162	266,549	312,776	0	209,407	75,980	254,135
'97	279,297	80,817	340,010	0	143,262	0	287,174
'98	386,525	148,320	183,715	0	206,987	0	299,869
'99	264,608	146,882	319,082	0	150,811	0	252,491
'00	267,865	157,208	174,136	0	149,911	0	220,439
'01	297,195	157,048	297,971	0	153,520	0	293,475
'02	253,000	224,797	298,884	35,000	0	0	306,297
'03	232,395	233,248	309,134	40,400	0	0	282,857
'04	237,052	236,026	334,968	46,238	0	0	278,109
'05	251,281	237,009	645,576	36,371	0	0	287,471
'06*	225,000	79,018	257,206*	42,900	0	0	234,211

\* Due to the shut-down and rehabilitation of Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery in 2006, the coho salmon plantings were reduced by sixty percent; the spring release skamania steelhead were stocked in the fall of 2005 as fingerlings, Michigan steelhead (winter-run) will be stocked in March of 2007 as yearlings instead of December 2006 as fingerlings, and the St. Joseph River fall steelhead plantings were reduced by approximately 40,000 fish to offset changes to the Trail Creek and Little Calumet steelhead stockings.



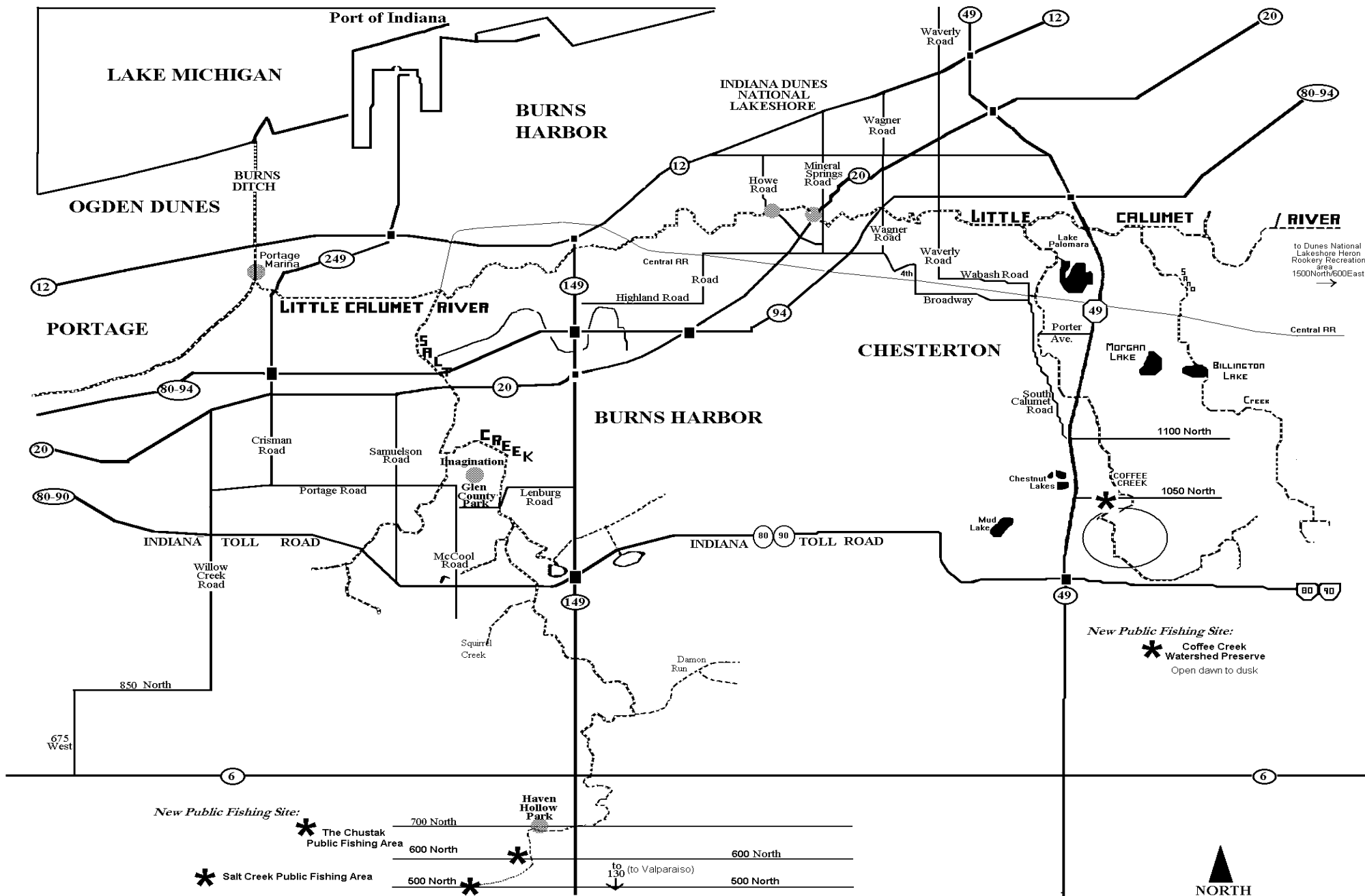




# **LITTLE CALUMET RIVER/SALT CREEK**

Sites along Little Calumet River and Salt Creek are mostly private; therefore, take care when selecting where to fish. Permission of the landowner is required on private lands. Most suggested areas include county parks and Dunes National Lakeshore property. (For more information regarding Dunes National Lakeshore please call (219) 926-7561

 **Fishing Sites**



## **ANGLER CREEL SURVEYS**

A creel survey is one of the most valuable tools available to the fisheries manager, since it provides:

- (1) angler characteristics and
- (2) a measure of anglers' catch of fish (both harvest and release).

Thus, careful analysis and evaluation of creel data indicate the relative successes of fisheries management activities and fish stocking efforts. Creel surveys, conducted by trained clerks, are designed to provide a great variety of information on fish caught by anglers such as: number of fish caught, catch rate, and length/weight characteristics of fish caught. In addition, angler characteristics such as length of fishing trip, county of residence and fish species sought are determined from the creel interview. The Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife conducts a number of creel surveys on different lakes and rivers each year. Anglers encountering creel clerks are asked to make every effort to cooperate and provide information requested by the creel clerk.